

Mrs. Gertrude Atherton's pictures of New York "society" appear to have been accepted by certain salient gentlemen of the English press as representative of the "American social scene," or, better still, of the "readable social scene." Sparkplug, or her latest effort, reads like a picture of the "Fortunate Grace" (Appletons), we can well understand those wise and worthy persons when they hold up their hands in pious horror and come to the conclusion that the manners and morals of the wealthier New Yorkers are past praise as representative of the "American social scene." Sparkplug is a wicked nobleman of the good old type with which novel readers are familiar, and his rounded shoulders, red-rimmed fish-like eyes, and drooping cheeks and lower lip mark him as a member of that British peerage which is the "good society" of the novel. Always a "manly" man for the purpose of the novel, Sparkplug is mainly for the purpose of novelists with awful examples of picturesque villainy and gilded vice. Mr. Jerome has called attention to that law of staided by which, when a man dies intestate, all his property goes to the family, and he leaves no money to the poor. Sparkplug is a member of the middle-class family, no Duke may hold this title unless he possesses a ruined constituency and at least three varieties of hereditary disease; while even a baronet must live up to his position by periodically abducting the most innocent unprotected female who may reach his eyes. Sparkplug is a member of the middle-class of the aristocracy, Mrs. Atherton simply conforms to the canons of that school of romance in which she has devoted herself, while the type of New York character that she sets before the reader are about equally true to life. Miss Augusta Forbes is a member of the "good society," and her friends are large and her complexion dull, but she has the carriage and air of a New York girl of fashion and she wears Parisian clothes that, as Mrs. Atherton puts it, "would have ameliorated a Gorgon." She and her young friends are much interested in socialism and are anxious to see the Duke, who comes to the arrival of the Duke, who comes to seek an heiress who will lift the mortgage and repair the roof on his ancestral home. Whereupon the women fall down and worship. We first meet him, on the morning of his arrival, in the large and sumptuous and very expensive house of the Duke, who is a member of the aristocracy, but he has met abroad. Having decided that, in default of anything better, she will do, he leaves the house with this characteristic reflection. "I wonder if I ever dreamed of a honeymoon with the one woman. If I did I should have forgotten it long ago." Sparkplug is a member of the middle-class of the aristocracy, Mrs. Atherton, in one magnificent sentence, describes the scene in the boxes: "Women of superior style, with little of artifice but much of refinement, were seated in the boxes, and they all saved them from confusion with the fashion plate, carrying themselves with a royal, albeit somewhat self-conscious, air, many of them crowned like empresses, others starred like royalty, producing the effect en masse of respectability, and the few who were not so, were upon their knees, the centuries have set their seal, hung, two or three in a frame, against the curving walls and red background of the great house; suspended in air, these goddesses of a new civilization, as if with insolent challenge to all that had come to stars.

"Oh, no, father! but they'll do it!"

"Is her father sold? American fortunes are not so easily won."

Having been satisfied on this score, he is taken to the box and thus presented: "Cuyler entered the box. 'Get out,' he said, 'every one of you. I've got a real live duke out there. He's mortgaged for the rest of the evening and time's short. I've drove him men out, then cranked him along under the hands of the Duke.'"

"Duke, Duke," he called, "come hither."

"The fair Augusta is spellbound by the glamour of his title, and possibly fascinated by his fish-like eyes, and the Duke decides that she might suit him even better than the other girl. He says to her, 'I have a favor to ask of you, my dear. I wish for Forbes took the notion he'd come down with five millions without turning a hair.'"

"I could swallow her whole and without a grimace," said the Duke dryly. "But I am half, two-thirds committed. I have no inclination for the favoring Miss Gertrude's father, although I must be obliged to tell her father frankly that I cannot marry her unless he comes down with half a million."

Mr. Creighton, being temporarily in a very tight place, is unable to come down with half a million, so the Duke brooks his engagement with the Duke's daughter, and the Duke's daughter, who is the disapproval of her father, Mr. Forbes, who, in the end, is forced by his wife to consent. One or two well-known persons are caricatured in this simple tale, which may possibly be accepted as a true picture of New York society, and the Duke's daughter, who is the disapproval of her father, Mr. Forbes, who, in the end, is forced by his wife to consent. One or two well-known persons are caricatured in this simple tale, which may possibly be accepted as a true picture of New York society, and the Duke's daughter, who is the disapproval of her father, Mr. Forbes, who, in the end, is forced by his wife to consent. 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any man. Whatever we may think of Cicero as a public man, there can be no doubt as to the magnitude of the debt owed him by posterity if I feel a better man for reading him," says old Plutarch, and Cornelius Nepos writes that he "was so great a writer with regard to his private life, that he has left us the history of that time elsewhere." In Mr. Bolster's volume one may get the solid facts of history while enjoying a narrative that has all the charm and interest of the best romance. The English version of Mr. Adnah David Jones is admirable.

"The Beautiful White Devil" (Appleton).—Mr. Guy Boothby, a young Australian novelist, revives once more the methods of that glorious school of romance of which Stephens Haywarde and the great and only Sylvanus Cobb were the acknowledged masters. Here we have, it might be said, the same old story of a beautiful woman, the same extraordinary adventures following one another at breathless speed, and the same splendid disregard for mere probability that marked the efforts of those wizards of an earlier day. The beautiful white devil is a female pirate, and she, like her Oriental counterpart, is one, we hear her character discussed in the billiard room of a Hong Kong hotel, we know that she will prove to be a rover of no ordinary kind. She for some years has played havoc on the high seas, looting merchantmen, sealing dispatches, and blowing innocent sailors to the Orient. One evening, bidding defiance to the whole British navy, she attacks the police of several continents. De Normville, a young doctor on his first vacation voyage to the East, goes up to his bedroom at night with his head full of the strange stories he has heard about her, and finds her waiting for him. Then, while from below there comes the rattle of rifle shots in the street and the chasing of the rampaging bandits the harbor, and while, over the mainland across the warf, the moon rises like the yolk of a hard-boiled egg (this figure is given), she tells him of her life, and of her most affable gentleman in a white duck suit. He is looking for a doctor willing to go to a distant and mysterious island to combat an outbreak of smallpox. A bargain is struck. Five hundred pounds is paid over, and they start that night. At once perceive that the elderly gentleman in the duck suit is none other than the confidential agent of the beautiful white devil herself. Now the adventures begin. After a terrible fight on a Chinese junk, in which the elderly gentleman is killed, the doctor escapes, pursued by a mob of desperadoes led by a pock-marked pirate named Kwong-Fung; they reach the yacht *Lone Star* and meet the mysterious woman. And wonderful yacht the *Lone Star* is, for though only a 800 tonner with auxiliary steam, she, though built before the days of modern naval-war, while, by an ingenious mechanical contrivance, she can at a moment's notice present the appearance of a total wreck, or completely change her shape, color, and rig. This white devil proves to be a lovely, virtuous, and much-maligned female who has done good deeds of the greatest importance with the highest moral principles, and, whenever she robs a man, gives half the proceeds to the poor. The other half she retains, as, of course, she needs it for the business, while, as for occasional murders and several minor forms of crime, they are necessary evils. Her acquaintance with a professional thief cannot be carried on without some risk. She is almost as wonderful a product as the yacht itself, for, by merely putting on a wig and changing her dress, she can so alter her appearance as to be unrecognizable, even by the eyes of her lover. After a brief but eventful stay at the mysterious island they go to Singapore to attend a gentleman who has been saying unkind things about her. Here she masquerades as a New York heiress, with much success and sedition. "Well," says the doctor, with her best New York accent, "I guess we're going to look for a dry goods store, and then I reckon well'll just take a paucor round the town," and later on she speaks of her friend who "operates considerable in pork," and of her local cure, "After an escape from jail, a shipwreck, a fight with a gigantic chimpanzee, and other marvellous adventures, the doctor and his faithful freebooter marry and settle down on the island, where they rear a healthy and promising brood of children." It is a pity that the author, feeling that, of late years, he had been sadly neglected.

In the "Wisdom of Fools" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) Mrs. Margaret Deland has written half a dozen short stories of a soft, soothing, and gentle sort, suitable to the tastes of the older persons like a certain dear old lady Robert Stevenson has told us of. She took the *Family Paper* on confidence, the tales it contained being family tales, not Regular Novel; but she was occasionally subject to sharp attacks of self-doubt, and she thought that perhaps the current fiction "was going to turn out a Regular Novel." The first of these tales, "Tis Polly to Be Wise," opens with a cooing and gurgling little love scene between the Rev. William Eaton and the young woman he is about to marry, and was quite agreeable when she came back upon the grassy bank of a purring stream, and she calls him Billy and tells him not to be a goose, while he regales her with light theology leavened with an occasional pun at which both smile; she says, "Now, Billy, really that is too much!" and was quite angry when he broke to her the dreadful news that in his early youth he once committed forgery. Whereupon she leaves him forever. The situation brings us perilously near to the Regular Novel, but the skilful introduction of a short conversation between a vestryman and a sexton saves the matter. "Was it a duty?" "Yes," said the vestryman; "it was it a duty to speak, or a duty to be silent?" There was a moment's pause. "Was Westcott a fool or a saint?" insisted the younger man. "I'll be hanged if I know," said the senior.

So the reader with a taste for abstract speculation is left to find the missing word.

Mr. Robert Barr stands in the front ranks of modern writers of the short, crisp, and vigorous style of story, told in straightforward narrative fashion, without elaborate ornamentation, and without any analysis of motives or subtlely of character drawing. In this field his native gifts of humor and inventiveness and his abundant vitality and enthusiasm carry his readers with him, and they are content to follow through his stories, and to be surprised at the end. In his latest and most ambitious effort, for which he has chosen the excellent title, "The Mutable Man" (Frederick A. Stokes), and which he lately appeared in serial form in THE STIM, Mr. Barr attains a task requiring some additional qualities, such as a knowledge of the world, and has produced a powerful and in places a thrilling book, he has not achieved the complete success gained in some of his shorter stories.

"For the mutable, rank-scented many, let them regard me as I do not flatter, and therein behold themselves."

This is the quotation from "Coriolanus," which fair upon the title page; and surely in this picture of the struggle of the ignorant masses against the aristocracy, the author has shown how he does not flatter. The interest turns on the fight between the manager of a big London factory and the discontented employees, led by blatant ass, the secretary or walking delegate of the union; and from first to last it is a tale of dogged pluck, of dogged pluck, of dogged pluck, on the one hand, and of waffling irresolution, internal jealousy and ignorance on the other. Mr. Barr puts his finger on the weak spot that is and always must be patent in the armor of unionism. His descriptions of the methods of the strike leaders are the most interesting part of the book. It is in the extraneous matter that he is less successful, and that here and there we find obvious traces of abundant digression.

In "Travel in Big Game Country," by Percival Selous and H. B. Hynden, Messrs. Longmans publish a handsome volume, illustrated with six drawings by Mr. Charles Wyndham. The greater part of the book consists of a number of chapters in which Mr. Selous describes his adventures in hunting leopards in Bechuanaland after gazelles, walli and moose in North America, lions in South Africa, and the rhinoceros and hippopotamus on the Limpopo River.

strive vigorously and stately, with its attempt at ornamentation of style, but with the directness and attention to practical details that mark the genuine sportsman, skilled in his craft, who kills his game, not from mere wanton lust of slaughter, but for a legitimate object as the hunter of furs or skins, or for the trophies on giraffe, buffalo, and zebra hunting. Mr. Bryden, while written in more polished style, are less interesting in their subject matter. It may be doubted whether either the giraffe or the zebra is a legitimate object of pursuit, though the latter is certainly a magnificent creature affords little sport, is practically useless for food, and, in case dead, of no commercial value. "Their curiosity is often the undoing. I have many times galloped steadily behind a troop of these zebras and then halted abruptly because they were so curious." They are quickly round in line and stand for minutes to have a good look at the pursuer. This was the time to put in a steady shot. Sometimes, even when the hunter is galloping, the will turn round and stand for a moment, appear to stare at their pursuer, and scarcely be provoked one instant by a whistling shot for amusement. More especially when, later, we read: "Of all sights in the fair veldt, there are few more to charm the eye—I know—few nobler than that of a good troop of Burckell's zebras—creatures which seem to me to combine the gentleness of the dove with the wildness. Where feeding quietly under the herbage, or resting across the plain, the dappled coats, as clean and shining as a well-groomed race-horse's, gleaming in the sunlight, brist, beautifully proportioned, and full of life, the animals themselves, the perfect perfection of feral life. True children of the sun-drenched plain, long may they yet flourish to decorate the African veldt."

It is a far cry from the fierce vigor of "On the Face of the Waters," Mrs. Flora Annie Steel's story of the life of a girl, whose father is gentle melancholy and more conventional setting of her latest novel, "In the Tideway" (Macmillan), and while in this latter she has not added advantages of the gorgeous Indian background and the interest attaching to a great historical event, it is still a very readable book on its own merits will appeal to many readers. The main motif, which is as old as the hills, is treated with great delicacy and skill. Two cousins, who have been boy and girl sweethearts, decide to "put away their childish love" and enter into a platonic, celibate marriage. The woman finds that she tied to a hopeless drunkard, and, in the inevitable end, she and her old lover, settling out start life afresh, drift in the tide-way and are lost. Some of the minor characters are sketched with much gusto and originality, such as the charming boyish lord; Miss Willina, more charming of old maid, and Will Lockhart, her lover; Capt. Weeks, the bashful warrior, and Cynthia Strong, the Glinton girl, are all excellent, as also is the learned professor, "who would much give to his jocular wit, which he dresses the deaker with a wisdom which he had been created for the purpose of exchanging the social qualities of man." The scene is laid in the Hebrides, and the greater charm of the story lies in its salt, breezy atmosphere of the wind-swept Moorsland, where the sea comes roaring in upon the broad stretches of white and purple heather, and the ceaseless music of the sea hints of the mystery "The wave-washed sand, and the wave's vast desire." This book will not have the same phenomenal success as the Indian story, but it is none the less a good, and, as such, will not lack appreciation.

In "Gods and Their Makers" (John Lane) Mr. Lawrence Housman has apparently challenged himself to a game of literary skill, which, after banting and buffeting a number of gods and goddesses, he ends up by attempting to knock corners off several of those fundamental ideas to which the world has clung throughout the ages, he succeeds in defeating himself with considerable result. Owing to his fixed determination to systematically and methodically demolish the religious beliefs, his method of stating any given proposition, is sometimes difficult to track his thought as meaning to their lair amid the mazes of fancy scenery. This is the more to be regretted in that there are occasional lucid intervals, when the reader gets a glimpse of the logic. Pecti and Aytah, two small savages, who, having committed sacrilege and incurred the anger of the priests, are banished to the island of secret mysteries, are interesting little animals, and some of their difficulties are clearly explained. The gods, however, grow weary of the attempt to follow an author who sacrifices everything to what he mistakes for originality of expression. The opening sentences are not alluring. "Into Pecti's soul came the vision of his God. In the midst of it all, amidst the confusion of his thoughts, the shifting darkness, he had beheld it; and as mental appetite took its bite of the unknown, the divine forms grew in clearness and definition." We wish Mr. Housman had restrained his fatal tendency to burst into song at the beginning of his chapters, and instead of indulging in a stealing march upon the unsuspecting reader, who often finds it difficult to proceed, in the ordinary way of things, to escape the minor poet.

Messrs. Harper publish an attractive volume of "Recreation in Botany," edited by Wm. Field, Hill, and Swamp, in which the authors' "Recreation in Botany" has followed a novel and sensible plan of grouping the flowering plants of the Atlantic seaboard, New England, and the Middle States upon the natural basis of environment. The first group consists of chapters grouped usually found (I.) on banks and shores; (II.) in swamps; (III.) near the seacoast; (IV.) in water; (V.) in low meadows; (VI.) along waysides and in dry fields. There are also chapters on weeds, on open woods, rocky, wooded hills, in plantations, and on the various descriptions of the color of flower, its shape, size, and outline of leaves, and indicate the time of blossoming.

With these data and the numerous and excellent illustrations by Mr. Benjamin Lander, the amateur student should find this volume a most ideal aid to his study of the flora of the United States. The book contains complete indices of a glossary and is printed and made up in Mr. Harper's best style, the cover design being especially artistic.

From Mr. John Lane we have received "The May Nature Study," the new edition of "The International Studio," which, since March of the present year, has been published at 7 Bodley Head in this city. The present number fully maintains the high reputation this artistic publication has gained as the best magazine of its kind. The new series, under the editorship of Joseph sketches of Mr. Mortimer Menpes illustrated with a number of examples of work, some beautiful reproductions of pictures by Mr. T. Millie Dowd, and the usual number of interesting features.

The last highly handy "The Great Curiousities" (Appleton) is that of Gen. Garfield by Gen. James Grant Wilson editor of the series. It is excellently bound and printed and contains a number of maps and illustrations and an index.

We have received a very interesting and handsomely printed volume entitled "Turner and His Art," by J. R. Spencer, containing reproductions of twelve of Turner's famous picture with an interesting and discursive commentary on American principle the name of the book publisher is not mentioned; but we can practically guarantee the excellence of the reproductions of Vol. VIII. of Putnam's admirable edition of the "Writings of Thomas Jefferson, Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford." It forms a most valuable contribution to American history and political philosophy.

We have received the "Writings of Scribners Illustrated Edition of the Writings of Benjamin Franklin," which includes the books has somewhat than this edition could scarcely be desired.

We have also received:

"After Her Death," by the author of "The World Beautiful" (Roberts Bros.).

"The Old Testament Under Fire," by the Rev. A. B. Gorenstam, D. D., E. T. D., Funk & Wagnalls Co.

"Christianity and Property—an Interpretation." (American Baptist Publication Society).

"A Short History of Education Being a reprint of the Article by Oscar Browning in the

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